2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

601 614 selves as the offspring of the mythical Omogoi-bai, in spite of the fact that they originate from his daughter, who married a Tatar or a Buryat.

583 591 606 To the end of the eighteenth century, there remained in vogue among the Yakut the custom of concession of wives. Formerly the bridegroom lived permanently in the house of his father-in-law, but in more recent times he lived there only for a definite period.

The *kalym*, or bride-price, replaced the system of marriage by capture. The origin of the *kalym* may be seen in the simulated enmity of the mother-in-law and the son-in-law.

583 587 837 842 A matriarchal system presupposes looseness of sex relations. The chastity of girls in rich families is not a question of morality but of *kalym*. The *kalym* for a widow or a girl who has had children is low. In the case of a widow, the belief in the right of the deceased husband may limit the number of wooers. A girl with a child, however, is sometimes preferred as a guaranty against barrenness which the Yakut dislike. In Yakut tales, the guest does not ask, "Where shall I sleep?", but, "Where do you put your guests?" and then they are shown to the beds of the girls. This is a form of hospitable hetaerism.

212 592 595 As the ancient Yakut had no written records, we know very little of their former life and particularly of their internal organization. Our information may be summarized in the following.

A household or yard was called *yal;* a group of individuals, who formed a family, as well as each member of the group, was called *kŏrgŏn*. The family consisted of blood relatives as well as of relatives by marriage: sons-in-law, wives (polygamy), adopted children, laborers, and slaves of both sexes. When the Yakut polygamist had several wives, he had several *yals*.

567 592 601 888 At the head of the family was the *aga*, meaning primarily "elder in age" and then "father." All the people of the household were regarded as and called by him "my children," "my sons or my daughters." Among these were included not only his own children, but also all relatives by blood and marriage, by adoption, by purchase (slaves), and any other dependents, as war captives. The *aga* continued to rule as long as he preserved his physical and mental abilities. According to a Yakut tradition, aged parents and also sick and crippled people, unable to work, were doomed to die and were even buried alive after three days of abundant entertainment.

● 181 888 Trostchansky, who lived as a political exile among the Yakut for about twenty years, characterizes them as egoistical utilitarians.[1] He

[1] Trostchansky, V. F., Notes on the Yakut of the Yakutsk District (*Memoirs, Imperial Society for Archaeology, History, and Ethnography*, vol. 27, parts 2–4, Kazan, 1911, in Russian), 97.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

●181 888 says that aged people are not in favor; they are beaten by their own children and are often forced to leave their dwellings and to beg from house to house. They are not admitted by the rich and poor people force them to do hard work, like dressing skins (Figs. 17, 18), for every bit of food.

583 614 586 The Yakut look for brides for their sons not only outside of their clans (*us, nasleg*), but outside of the *ulus*, or union of clans. A girl, say the Yakut, is really a lot of aliens. This saying is reminiscent of the old time marriage by capture. Marriage is now also exogamic, but *kalym* (bride-price) is given in money, cattle, and other goods. Practically, the *kalym* may be regarded as an exchange of presents. What the parents of the bride receive from the parents of the bridegroom is almost equivalent to what they give her when she leaves their house. Often the bride carries with her cattle and goods of a greater value than her parents received that she may not be reproached by the bridegroom's relatives for bringing only a small dowry with her. The young bride remains under the protection of her clan and family. Many common law customs regulate disagreements and dissensions: If a young woman leaves her husband because she dislikes him, her dowry remains with him; but, if she accuses him of cruelties, relatives on both sides decide the matter. The Yakut do not like to appeal to the Russian courts.

562 614 588 We have previously mentioned the exogamic character of the Yakut marriages, but some other tendencies have been observed in the northern districts of Yakut Province. The few rich families endeavor to keep their horses, cattle, and grazing places within a certain group of families through marriage of close relatives, insofar as this is permitted by the Russian church. By special permission of a bishop, even cousins are permitted to marry. In one case, known to the author, a man lived with his niece, a marital relation forbidden by the Church, though his neighbors avoided mentioning this irregularity to strangers.

614 562 177 The old Yakut clan was governed by family representatives or a family council in which women very often played a conspicuous rôle. After the Russian conquest of Yakut Province, clan ties became less important and the family head more despotic.

628 581 682 The Yakut were warlike and blood vengeance between clans occurred very often, but reconciliation was often sought through payment of a ransom or by giving a girl in marriage, the best way to end hostilities. It was more difficult to compound assassinations within the clan. To kill the murderer would deprive the clan of another member and the punishment had to take the form of ransom, service, or public disapproval.

6: Sauer--124 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 156, 181, 557, 888, 623

"They are very revengeful of insults; nay, even entail revenge on their progeny: or do they ever forget a benefit received; for they not only make restitution, but recommend to their offspring the ties of friendship and gratitude to their benefactors. They are very obedient to their chiefs and oghoniors, [RCH: senior members of the group; see catagory 116, p. 117, footnote] and shew their attachment by frequent visits and presents. They are extremely hospitable and attentive to travellers, especially to such as behave with a degree of good nature, and very inquisitive and intelligent; for they ask questions freely, and answer any without embarrassment or hesitation. They are anxious to secure friendship and a good name, and seem to study the dispositions of such as may be of service to them, to whom they are liberal in presents, and even in flattery. They deliberate in council on all matters of public concern, as the course to be taken by each in the chase, &c. The oghoniors are surrounded by the rest, and their advice is always taken. I have never seen an old man contradicted or opposed, but always as implicitly obeyed as a father of a family. A young man ever gives his opinion with the greatest respect and caution; and even when asked, he submits his ideas to the judgement of the old."

10: Bush--161-162 T-3 (1865-67) 1871 Yakut
116, 181, 609

"They are neat both with regard to person and habitations, more so than any other of the eastern tribes of Siberia, and are very domestically inclined. Horses and cows are their constant companions. Those whom we saw at the settlement near Tugur had been formerly in the employ of the Russian-American Fur Company in Ajan, and were afterward brought to this place by Captain Lindholm. Among them [162] were a number whom Swartz had previously known at Ajan, so our reception was most cordial."

10: Bush--230 T-3 (1865-67) 1871 Yakut
116, 181, 825, 231

"The Yakouts, notwithstanding their amiable and peaceful dispositions, are generally very cruel toward animals. Their favorite mode of killing a horse for food is to bind it down strongly with cords, when the breast is cut open, and then one of them, thrusting his arm into the cavity, kills the animal by compressing its heart with his hand. They claim that it gives the meat a better flavor."

11: Lansdell--299 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 142, 177, 181

"In the centre of the Yakutsk province, occupying the valley of the Lena, roam the Yakutes, some of whom I met as far off as Nikolaefsk. They are of middle height, and of a light copper colour, with black hair, which the men cut close. The sharp lines of their faces express indolent and amiable gentleness rather than vigour and passion. They reminded me of North American Indians; and I agree with Erman, who says that their appearance is that of a people who have grown wild rather than of a thoroughly and originally rude race. Those I saw, however, having been long settled among the Russians, had perhaps become somewhat more polished than their wandering brethren. As a race they are good-tempered, orderly, hospitable, and capable of enduring great privation with patience; but in independence of character they contrast unfavourably with their Tunguse neighbours. Lay a finger in anger on one of the Tunguses, and nothing will induce him to forget the insult; whereas with the Yakutes, the more they are thrashed the better they work.* [RCH: For text of footnote see category 116, pp. 299-300.]"

16: Great Britain Admiralty --165 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 181, 191, 426, 533

"The mode of speech of the Yakuts is slow, disconnected and abrupt. They are described as good-tempered, orderly and hospitable, with more energy than their countenances suggest. They are capable of enduring a long strain, and are patient under privation; but they lack independence, and need stimulus: it is said of them: 'the more you beat them, the better they work.' They are apt to fall into debt, mostly to their own fellow-countrymen, for the more enterprising among them have earned the reputation of being the Jews of Siberia. They are fond of noise, song and dance; their improvised songs have deadly monotony as they consist of eternal repetitions of one phrase."

24: Wrangell--39-40 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 181, 361, 691

"As a nation they are unsocial, litigious, and vindictive. An injury received by one of them is very rarely forgotten, and, if he cannot revenge it himself, he will leave the feud to his son. Their passion for litigation is excessive: they will frequently undertake difficult and expensive journeys, in a cause where perhaps the matter in dispute is not of the value of a rouble. Their unsocial dispo-[40]sition, which leads them to prefer settling by single families at a distance from each other, is strikingly contrasted with the cheerful and ready hospitality which they show to strangers. They very seldom settle in communities, and it is only along the route from Jakuzk to the Aldan, where the country is more populous, that such settlements are now and then to be met with; but beyond the Werchojansk chain, the solitary jurti are often hundreds of wersts apart, so that the nearest neighbours may not see each other for years. Such distances are far greater than can be required on account of pasture, and are rather to be ascribed to the disposition which leads them to seek solitude, and to avoid all social intercourse."

27: Coxwell--34 B-3 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 157, 181, 538

"Such a trait as barbarity or cruelty is still so common among mankind that it would be remarkable if it did not here figure undisguised. But the callous narration of torture or of mutilation, which distinguishes certain stories among the Chukchis, the Ossetes and the Yakuts, differentiates them from anything which could occur among civilised races. Cruelty occurs among ourselves, but is only described with reprehension."

38: Dobell--42 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 181, 322

"Of all the Siberian hordes, the Yakuts appeared to me the keenest and the cleverest. The wooden or log houses, of which the town is principally composed, are all built by Yakut workmen; and they certainly exhibit a great deal of solid excellent workmanship. Indeed, there is scarcely any work in cabinet-making or carving that a Yakut will not imitate well, with nothing but a knife and hatchet."

38: Dobell--43 [3] G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 181, 556, 622, 692

"In general they are great talkers, and too much disposed to litigation. To gratify this passion, they have obtained permission from the Government of Irkutsk to have what is called in Russian a doom, or petty court of justice of their own, where their golovoi, or head man, with some of the princes, presides to decide the quarrels and disputes which occur amongst them. As the doom is at Yakutsk, of course the golovoi and the princes who preside, are obliged to live there, at a great expense; and this expense is paid by the Oulooses in general: they also receive handsome salaries. Here, then, is another plan of enriching the rich and impoverishing the poor; for I have been confidently informed that it has produced no good whatever; on the contrary, the Yakuts are constantly dissatisfied with the decisions and almost invariably refer their causes to the Russian tribunals for a final settlement."